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December 13, 1962

Dr. George F. Baughman
New College
Van Skike Building
Sarasota, Florida

Dear Mr. Baughman:

This will, I think, appear to you to be an odd letter because it is only an inquiry and I'm not certain how serious at that. A year or so ago I talked with Rembert Patrick and I believe that he wrote you about me as a possibility for the history faculty for New College.

I have been here at the University of Mississippi for 27 years (I am now 54), have been chairman of the department, have been active in historical society work, have done a good deal of publishing, etc. Last month I succeeded Pat as president of the Southern Historical Association.

For several years I have been thinking that I might not want to do the last ten or fifteen years of teaching in Mississippi. In those years I hope, above everything else, to publish a couple of very good books, on southern leadership (or the lack of it). I have lost whatever interest I ever had in fooling with the mechanics of writing of theses and dissertations. But above everything else I think that I am tired of butting my head against a stone wall in the sovereign domain of Ross Barnett. Along with a good many others on the faculty here, I am and have been for years a target of the Citizens Council and I have no intention of leaving under fire - unless I am fired, which seems unlikely at the moment.

So, I suppose this is a kind of friendly inquiry about your plans. I have no idea as to whether I might fit into them but I do remember that I was intrigued by what I thought you had in mind when I read about the possibility of New College in the summer of 1961.

I know that you are a very busy man. If you can see any prospect of profit in it for you and me, I'd like very much to hear from you.

Sincerely,

James W. Silver
professor of history